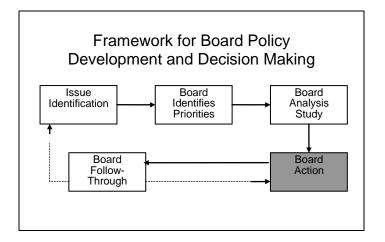
# Iowa State Board of Education

### **Executive Summary**

May 10, 2012



**Agenda Item:** AEA 267 Paraeducator Preparation Program Approval

**lowa Goal:** All PK -12 students will achieve at a high level.

Equity Impact Statement:

The administrative rules governing this process require preparation programs to address diversity issues.

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**Presenter:** Marietta Rives

Consultant

Bureau of Student and Family Support Services

Attachments: 1

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that the State Board approve for one year

the paraeducator preparation programs submitted by Area Education Agency 267. The next review will be during the

2012-2013 school year.

**Background:** Legislation originally passed in 1998 and revised in 2000

created a voluntary paraeducator certification. The legislation was prompted by the need to have well trained paraeducators providing assistance to students and teachers. Licensure rules were established by the Board of Educational Examiners. The State Board of Education approves the voluntary preparation programs according to standards and procedures contained in

Chapter 80 of the Iowa Administrative Code.

## Programs Recommended for Approval May 10, 2012

Area Education Agency 267 (AEA 267) Paraeducator Programs to include:

Generalist Level I
Early Childhood
English Language Learner
Library, Media, Technology
Special Needs
Speech Language Pathologist Assistant

lowa's voluntary paraeducator certification program is one way for paraeducators to meet the requirements set forth in No Child Left Behind. An additional benefit of this program is that certification will establish realistic opportunities for upward mobility through a career ladder pathway for paraeducators.

The institution named above has submitted a request for approval or re-approval of programs to certify paraeducators in each of the listed content areas. Although the paraeducator certification program is voluntary, there are several benefits to having paraeducators certified.

- 1. All learners will be better served and the quality of education and related services will improve with the availability of a better-prepared paraeducator workforce.
- 2. Paraeducators have mastered skills that are required to support and supplement teacher/provider programs.

The programs have been reviewed. In reviewing the programs, it was important to look for three major components:

- 1. Verification that each of the standards included in Iowa Administrative Code Chapter 80 have been met.
- 2. Verification that all standards and competencies of Chapter 22, Board of Educational Examiners administrative rules were included.
- 3. Verification that criteria to evaluate performance of the standards were present and appropriate.

#### **Strengths of the programs:**

AEA 267 has recently taken steps to revise and create a paraeducator certification program that will better prepare candidates to support lowa's most needy students.

Diversity efforts have been extended to include paraeducators and have the potential to greatly enhance the paraeducator candidate pool.

#### **Areas for improvement:**

Because the courses at the core of these programs are newly designed, it is recommended that they be reviewed after implementation and revised based on program and candidate data that is collected.

It is recommended that local education agency teachers and administrators be added to the paraeducator advisory committee.

Ensure that paraeducators who work with English language learners have access to the most recent research and current practice in their field.

Consider ways to differentiate instruction for candidates who may not be successful with course content.

#### Recommendation:

Based upon the review of programs submitted for consideration, a one year approval is recommended for the Generalist Level I Paraeducator; Early Childhood Paraeducator; English Language Learner Paraeducator; and Library, Media, Technology Paraeducator; Special Needs Paraeducator and Speech Language Pathology Assistant programs through Great Prairie Area Education Agency.